

From: Matt Rowland
To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern:

As should already be clear to justice department officials, the proposed Microsoft Anti-trust settlement appears to be a travesty, a measure that in fact remedies none of the complaints raised against the software giant while providing the comforting appearance that Microsoft has been reprimanded.

I imagine that's fine with Microsoft. They know the value of publicity and no doubt PR spin-meisters are already framing a picture of a reinvented Microsoft that encourages competition and innovation above all else. The company will come out of this with renewed vigor, knowing it can even take on the federal government and win.

The losers, meanwhile, are consumers and competitors. Based on what I've seen of Microsoft's behavior in the press, the primary goal is profit derived from market domination, with innovation and quality seemingly secondary. One can't deny that Microsoft has changed the landscape, in many respects for the better, but if its strategy for retaining market share is to put the industry it has helped to define in a stranglehold, it must be restrained.

How will consumers benefit? How will the tech industry benefit?

The efficacy of the proposed settlement must be considered carefully in light of these two questions to ensure that it has the desired effect. The issues are quite complex, but since you are the ones tasked with understanding what's involved and evaluating the settlement proposal, I trust your decision in this will be the best one for the general public and the tech/software industry.

I'm sure you've been sent this link previously, but it summarizes key sticking points in the settlement:
<http://www.kegel.com/remedy/letter.html>

I'd be wasting my time to attempt to recount the problems with the settlement when such a clear exposition of them sits right there.

Respectfully yours,

Matt Rowland
TaxWise Technical Support
mrowland@taxwise.com

matt@paperlove.org

